

The following Listing of the Claims will replace any previous listing.

Listing of The Claims:

- 1-27. (Cancelled)
28. (Currently amended) The method of claim 42, wherein the step of detecting the presence of HPV in said vaginal specimen comprises (a) extracting DNA from the vaginal specimen, and (b) detecting the presence of the HPV DNA in the vaginal specimen.
29. (Currently amended) The method of claim 28, wherein the step of detecting the presence of HPV in said vaginal specimen comprises amplification of HPV nucleic acid.
30. (Currently amended) The method of claim 42, wherein the step of detecting the presence of HPV comprises (a) contacting the vaginal specimen with a first polypeptide that binds to an HPV protein; and (b) detecting the presence of the HPV protein in the vaginal specimen.
31. (Previously presented) The method of claim 30, wherein said first polypeptide is an HPV specific antibody.
32. (Currently amended) The method of claim 31, wherein the step of detecting the presence of the HPV protein in the sample comprises (a) contacting the vaginal specimen with a second polypeptide which binds to said HPV specific antibody; and (b) detecting the presence of said HPV specific antibody bound to said HPV protein in the vaginal specimen.
33. (Cancelled)
34. (Currently amended) The method of claim 42, wherein the HPV is high risk HPV (hrHPV) and wherein detection of the presence of high risk HPV comprises assaying the vaginal specimen for the presence of high risk HPV.
35. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42, wherein said longitudinal axis runs parallel to a longitudinal axis of said inner tube.

36. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42, wherein said inner tube element and said outer tube are cylindrical in shape, and wherein the length of said inner tube and said outer tube are roughly equal.
37. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42, wherein said bristles comprise a flexible material selected from the group consisting of: polyethylene, polyurethane, polyvinyl chloride, polysiloxanes and nylon.
38. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42, wherein said device does not use an absorbent material to collect the sample.
39. (Cancelled)
40. (Cancelled)
41. (Cancelled)
42. (Currently amended) A method for detecting a presence of human papilloma virus (HPV) in a vaginal specimen, comprising:

(a) obtaining the vaginal specimen that contains ~~cervical epithelial cells and~~ few or no endocervical cells with a device comprising a collection element and a shield in a form of an outer tube that surrounds said collection element, wherein said collection element comprises

(i) a retractable inner tube which is retractable with respect to said outer tube, and

(ii) a brush attached to said inner tube, wherein said brush and said inner tube have the same with a longitudinal axis, wherein said brush has and bristles that are substantially perpendicular to said longitudinal axis of said brush[[:]], and the bristles contact the vaginal wall and obtain the vaginal sample,

and

(b) detecting the presence of HPV in the specimen without requiring that the vaginal specimen contains endocervical ~~endothelial~~ cells.

43. (Currently amended) A method for collecting a vaginal specimen useful for detecting the presence of human papilloma virus (HPV) in said vaginal specimen, comprising:
- (a) obtaining the vaginal specimen that contains ~~cervical cells~~ and few or no endocervical cells with a device comprising a collection element and a shield in a form of an outer tube that surrounds said collection element, wherein said collection element comprises
- (i) a retractable inner tube which is retractable with respect to said outer tube, and
- (ii) a brush attached to said inner tube, wherein said brush and said inner tube have the same with a longitudinal axis, wherein said brush has and bristles that are substantially perpendicular to said longitudinal axis of said brush, and the bristles contact the vaginal wall and obtain the vaginal sample.
44. (Currently amended) The method of claim 43, wherein said longitudinal axis of said outer tube runs parallel to a longitudinal axis of said inner tube.
45. (Previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein said inner tube element and said outer tube are cylindrical in shape, and wherein the length of said inner tube and said outer tube are roughly equal.
46. (Previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein said bristles comprise a flexible material selected from the group consisting of: polyethylene, polyurethane, polyvinyl chloride, polysiloxanes and nylon.
47. (Currently amended) The method of claim 43, wherein said device does not use an absorbent material to collect the vaginal sample.